

BERKSHIRE VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION

Eileen Myers, Vice President of Home Care, Berkshire Medical Center

OVERVIEW: The Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association has provided more than 100 years of service to the residents of Berkshire County. Our public health services are provided with the support of the Boards of Health in Berkshire County. Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association, through the Dalton Board of Health, provides disease prevention and health promotion services throughout the year to the residents of Dalton. These services include regularly scheduled prevention clinics where residents receive personal attention in:

- monitoring blood pressure
- testing blood sugar
- counseling on health related issues and
- referral as necessary to other medical care providers and wellness programs

Immunization clinics are held on request to provide routine immunization to children and adults. These clinics include the annual influenza and pneumonia clinics in the fall. This fall was particularly challenging due to the late arrival of any flu vaccine and the restrictions determining what residents could receive vaccine at any specific time. These restrictions were mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Routine childhood immunizations and lead testing are also available. Communicable disease reporting and tracking is an ongoing part of the Public Health program.

WELLNESS PROMOTION:

- 354 Individuals were served at health promotion clinics in the year 2004
- Clinics were held at 5 different sites (the town hall, community house, and the 3 senior housing sites)
- 535 flu shots were given

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE TRACKING: Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires reporting of all communicable diseases. The following incidents were reported, investigated and received follow-up. This includes 2 residents that received daily visits for tuberculosis treatment.

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| • 1 Campylobacter | • 2 Invasive Streptococcus |
| • 2 Salmonella | • 2 Tuberculosis |
| • 1 Viral Meningitis | • 9 Pertussis |
| • 1 Varicella | |

COLLABORATION: Our Public Health coordinator works with the Dalton Council on Aging to provide coordination of services for residents. Cholesterol/comprehensive health screenings to low income senior residents of the town of Dalton were administered by Accent on Health through a grant provided by Elder Services of Berkshire County. Primary providers, Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living Facilities, receive State Department of Public Health vaccines and immunization information. Curtis Manor and Sugar Hill residents were provided administration of flu vaccine. As a member of the community health care continuum of Berkshire Health Systems, collaboration with and referrals to the other health care professionals are readily made. During time of illness or

disability, BVN professional home care clinicians provide treatment and health guidance for the entire family. Registered nurses, physical and occupational therapists, speech therapists and trained home health aides are part of the team to provide care and assistance in times of illness and family crisis.

Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association wishes to thank the Select Board for the opportunity to serve your residents. Please feel free to call BVNA for information at 1-800-788-2862. We look forward to our continued relationship in maintaining and promoting good health in Dalton.